DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 061 894 HE 002 967

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TITLE Freshman Class Vacancies in Fall 1971 and Recent Trends in Enrollments of Minority Freshmen. Report of Higher Education Panel Survey # 3.
INSTITUTION National Institutes of Health (DHEW), Bethesda, Md.; National Science Foundation, Washington, D.C.
PUB DATE [72]
NOTE 17p.

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.65 HC-$3.29
DESCRIPTORS *Admission (School); College Choice; *College Freshmen; Enrollment Rate; *Enrollment Trends; *Higher Education; Minority Groups; *Negro Students

ABSTRACT

The survey summarized in this report dealt primarily with 2 questions about the fall 1971 entering freshman classes at colleges and universities in the U.S.: (1) How many additional freshmen could institutions have accommodated in the fall of 1971? and (2) How many black and other minority freshmen enrolled in the fall of 1971, and how do these enrollments compare with those of the previous year? The survey produced the following major findings: (1) Entering freshman classes at private colleges and universities reached only about 82% capacity in the fall of 1971; (2) although first-time, full-time freshmen enrollments increased by an estimated 12% between 1970 and 1971, nearly 85% of this total increase was accounted for by public 2-year colleges; and (3) although the absolute number of black and other minority freshmen grew between 1970 and 1971, the proportions of blacks and other minorities among all first-time freshmen declined slightly during that interval. The implications of these findings are discussed in the report. (Author/HS)

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Freshman Class Vacancies in Fall 1971 and Recent Trends in Enrollments of Minority Freshmen

Report of Higher Education Panel Survey #3*

The survey summarized in this report dealt primarily with two questions about the fall 1971 entering freshman classes at colleges and universities in the United States.

1. How many additional freshmen could institutions have accommodated in the fall of 1971?
2. How many black and other minority freshmen enrolled in the fall of 1971, and how do these enrollments compare with those of the previous year?

The first question was designed to determine how fully existing academic facilities are being utilized, the assumption being that such information could aid in long-range planning at the state and national levels, particularly in view of the budgetary constraints currently imposed on many public and private institutions.

The second question was included to assess the extent to which opportunities are being expanded to those minority groups that have historically been underrepresented in higher education. Such data would presumably show whether current efforts to

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*This survey was conducted under a grant provided by the National Science Foundation, the National Institutes of Health, and the U.S. Office of Education. This report was prepared by Alexander W. Astin, Barbara A. Blandford, and Terry G. Mahn.

recruit minority students are succeeding or whether these recruitment efforts should be modified.

Method

To obtain the most reliable estimates possible of vacancies and of minority enrollments, all institutions in the Higher Education Panel (HEP), except for independent medical schools, were surveyed. The full Panel consists of two equivalent random samples of institutions totaling 520 two-year colleges, four-year colleges, and universities. These institutions were selected randomly from the 36 cells in the stratification design for the Council's Cooperative Institutional Research Program (Office of Research, 1971). (The stratification design is shown in Figure 1 of the Appendix).

During December of 1971, each of 511 institutions was requested by mail to provide the necessary information on a postcard which was to be returned to the Council. The return postcard is reproduced below:

1. How many first-time, full-time freshmen did you enroll this fall (1971)?

   TOTAL_____ MEN_____ WOMEN_____

2. How many additional first-time, full-time freshmen could you have enrolled this fall? _____

   NONE_____(If you enrolled a surplus of freshmen, please indicate how many_____.)

3. What is your minority enrollment of first-time, full-time freshmen for this fall?

   BLACK_____ OTHER MINORITIES*_____

4. What was your minority enrollment of first-time, full-time freshmen for last year (Fall 1970)?

BLACK_____ OTHER MINORITIES*_____

*Other minorities include Orientals, American Indians, and Spanish-speaking Americans.

After several telephone followups, data were received from 473 of the 511 institutions (a 92.6 percent return). Of these 473, 409 (86.5 percent) provided complete data on all items. No significant response bias was apparent when the stratification cell membership of these 409 and of the total sample of 511 were compared.

Table 1 shows the numbers of institutions in the responding sample and in the total population of American colleges and universities as defined by the U.S. Office of Education (Higher Education Directory-Part III, 1970). Institutions that did not admit first-time freshmen and institutions that enrolled fewer than 25 first-time, full-time freshmen in 1970 were excluded from the population. To derive population estimates, two types of weights were calculated for each of the 36 stratification cells. The first set was simply the ratio between the total number of institutions in the population and the total number of responding institutions that provided complete data in a given cell. This weight was used to estimate the total number of institutions in the population reporting vacancies and the total number reporting surpluses of freshmen.

To obtain population estimates of total vacancies, total first-time enrollments in 1971, and total minority enrollments

in 1970 and 1971, a second set of weights was developed. This second weight consisted of the ratio between total 1970 first-time, full-time enrollments for the population of institutions and the total for sample institutions in each stratification cell. The population estimates thus derived are shown in the last column of Table 1 and in Tables 2 and 3.

Results

Because so many public institutions now have an open admissions policy whereby they must admit all secondary school graduates who apply, the problem of defining vacancies in the public sector becomes almost insurmountable. Many of the respondents in public institutions felt that they simply could not provide a meaningful estimate. Therefore, findings about vacancies and surpluses are reported for private institutions only (Table 2). Nearly 76 percent of all private institutions (967 of 1,272) could have accommodated more students in the 1971 freshman classes. An estimated 6.4 percent of the population of private institutions reported that they had "surpluses" (i.e., more freshmen than they would have preferred).

Of the various types of private institutions, the most severely underenrolled were the two-year colleges, 88 percent of which reported having vacancies, as against 74 percent of the four-year colleges and 61.8 percent of the universities. Conversely, private universities were more likely to be overcrowded; 13.2 percent reporting having surpluses, as against 6.9 percent of the four-year colleges and only 2.9 percent of the two-year colleges.

If the vacancies in different types of private institutions are considered in relation to the total freshman enrollments at these institutions (see Table 3), then private institutions were filled to 81.5 percent capacity. The problem of unfilled places was, as indicated above, most severe in the two-year private colleges, where enrollment was less than 72 percent capacity, a compared with 90.2 percent capacity for the private universities. Between these two extremes are the private four-year colleges, which reached 83.2 percent capacity.

These gross figures for broad categories of private institutions mask certain important differences (Appendix, Tables A and B). Freshman classes in Catholic four-year colleges, for example, were filled to only about 73 percent capacity (as compared with nearly 82 percent for all four-year colleges). A college's selectivity was also a major determinant of utilization of facilities: Freshman classes in the most selective Protestant colleges reached 93 percent of the institution's capacity, and those in the most selective nonsectarian colleges reached 95.8 percent. Among the private universities, the most selective had freshman classes that were filled to 95.6 percent of capacity, whereas freshman classes in the least selective were filled to only 81.1 percent of capacity.

In summary, few private institutions were filled to capacity in 1971, and many had substantial numbers of unfilled places for freshmen.

The data in Table 3 indicate that, between 1970 and 1971, freshman enrollment grew by about 12 percent, and most of this

increase (nearly 85 percent) was accounted for by one group: the public two-year colleges. Enrollments in the public universities increased less than 1 percent, and enrollments in the public four-year colleges actually declined by nearly 2 percent. Enrollments in private institutions showed a moderate 7.4 percent increase, more than half of which was accounted for by the four-year colleges.

It seems likely that this pattern of burgeoning first-time enrollments in public two-year colleges and the decline in public four-year colleges probably reflects the changing roles of these two types of institutions. As the number of two-year college graduates has swelled, the four-year colleges in some states have become primarily upper-division undergraduate institutions for transfer students from junior colleges.

Trends in enrollments of black and other minority students are shown in Table 4. Although the absolute numbers of black and other minority freshmen increased between 1970 and 1971, their proportion among all entering freshmen slightly declined, particularly in public two-year colleges, whose minority enrollment dropped by 3.8 percent. The proportions of blacks and other minorities in entering freshman classes increased at all other types of institutions.

The pattern of black enrollments at various types of institutions is worth noting. For example, although public institutions enrolled somewhat higher proportions of black freshmen than did private institutions, the proportion entering public universities was lower (5.2 percent) than at any of the

three groups of private institutions. The black enrollments for the private two-year and four-year colleges are, of course, increased disproportionately by the inclusion of black colleges in the figures. Thus, when the black institutions are excluded, the black enrollments in the public universities (5.2 percent) are somewhat higher than those in the private two-year and four-year colleges (3.6 percent and 4.4 percent, respectively; see Table C in the Appendix). However, black enrollments in private universities (6.6 percent) and in public two-year and four-year colleges (8.6 percent and 6.8 percent, respectively), are still higher than those in public universities when predominantly black institutions are excluded from the figures.

Comparing the black enrollments in predominantly black and in predominantly white institutions (see Table C, cells 34, 35, and 36 in the Appendix), one finds that, of the estimated 148,000 blacks among freshmen entering college in 1971, fewer than one in three enrolled at a predominantly black institution, even though enrollments in black institutions appeared to be increasing at least as fast as enrollments in other types of institutions. One problem here, of course, is that of definition: Some formerly white institutions have recently become predominantly black in their enrollments, and some new institutions -- particularly those in urban areas -- enrolled a majority of black students, even though they have not yet been officially identified as "predominantly black" by the U.S. Office of Education.

Summary

This sample survey of freshman class vacancies and trends in minority enrollments produced the following major findings:

1. Entering freshman classes at private colleges and universities in the United States reached only about 82 percent capacity in the fall of 1971. Underenrollment was greatest in the two-year and the nonselective private colleges and lowest in the private universities and selective private colleges. These data suggest the possibility that certain institutions in the private sector may be in a position to take some of the enrollment load now facing many of the public institutions.

2. Although first-time, full-time freshmen enrollments increased by an estimated 12 percent between 1970 and 1971, nearly 85 percent of this total increase was accounted for by public two-year colleges. Increases at other types of institutions were well below 10 percent, and public four-year colleges actually showed a slight decrease.

3. Although the absolute number of black and other minority freshmen grew between 1970 and 1971, the proportions of blacks and other minorities among all first-time freshmen declined slightly during the same interval. This proportionate decline was accounted for entirely by the public two-year colleges. All other types of institutions showed increases in the proportions of both black and other minority freshmen.

Table 1

The Sample and Population of Institutions

Type of Institution	Number of Institutions	
	Sample	Population Estimate
Public universities	27	119
Private universities	21	68
Public four-year colleges	49	360
Private four-year colleges	231	962
Public two-year colleges	46	792
Private two-year colleges	35	242
All public institutions	122	1,271
All private institutions	287	1,272
Total	409	2,543

Table 2

Freshman Class Vacancies in the Private Sector

Type of Institution	Number of Institutions With: Vacancies In Freshman Class		Surplus of Freshmen		Total Vacancies For Freshmen	
	Sample	Population Estimate	Sample	Population Estimate	Sample	Population Estimate
Universities	13	42	3	9	2,502	9,834
Four-Year Colleges	156	712	14	66	13,405	65,126
Two-Year Colleges	28	213	2	7	3,766	26,012
All Private Institutions	197	967	19	82	19,071	100,974

Table 3

Changes in First-time, Full-time Freshman Enrollments, 1970-71

Type of Institution	1970 Sample	1970 Population Estimate	1971 Sample	1971 Population Estimate	Estimated Population Change, 1970-71 N	Estimated Population Change, 1970-71 %
Public universities	69,405	297,831	72,225	300,447	+2,616	+0.9
Private universities	24,065	86,176	25,293	90,871	+4,695	+5.4
Public four-year colleges	56,052	361,650	55,367	354,649	-7,001	-1.9
Private four-year colleges	73,033	272,523	74,553	289,167	+16,644	+6.1
Public two-year colleges	27,719	570,231	48,762	742,954	+172,723	+30.3
Private two-year colleges	11,355	56,268	12,875	65,640	+9,372	+16.6
All public institutions	163,176	1,229,712	176,354	1,398,050	+168,338	+13.7
All private institutions	108,453	414,967	112,721	445,678	+30,711	+7.4
Total	271,629	1,644,679	289,075	1,843,728	+199,049	+12.1

Table 4

Estimated Population Changes in Minority Freshman Enrollments, 1970-71

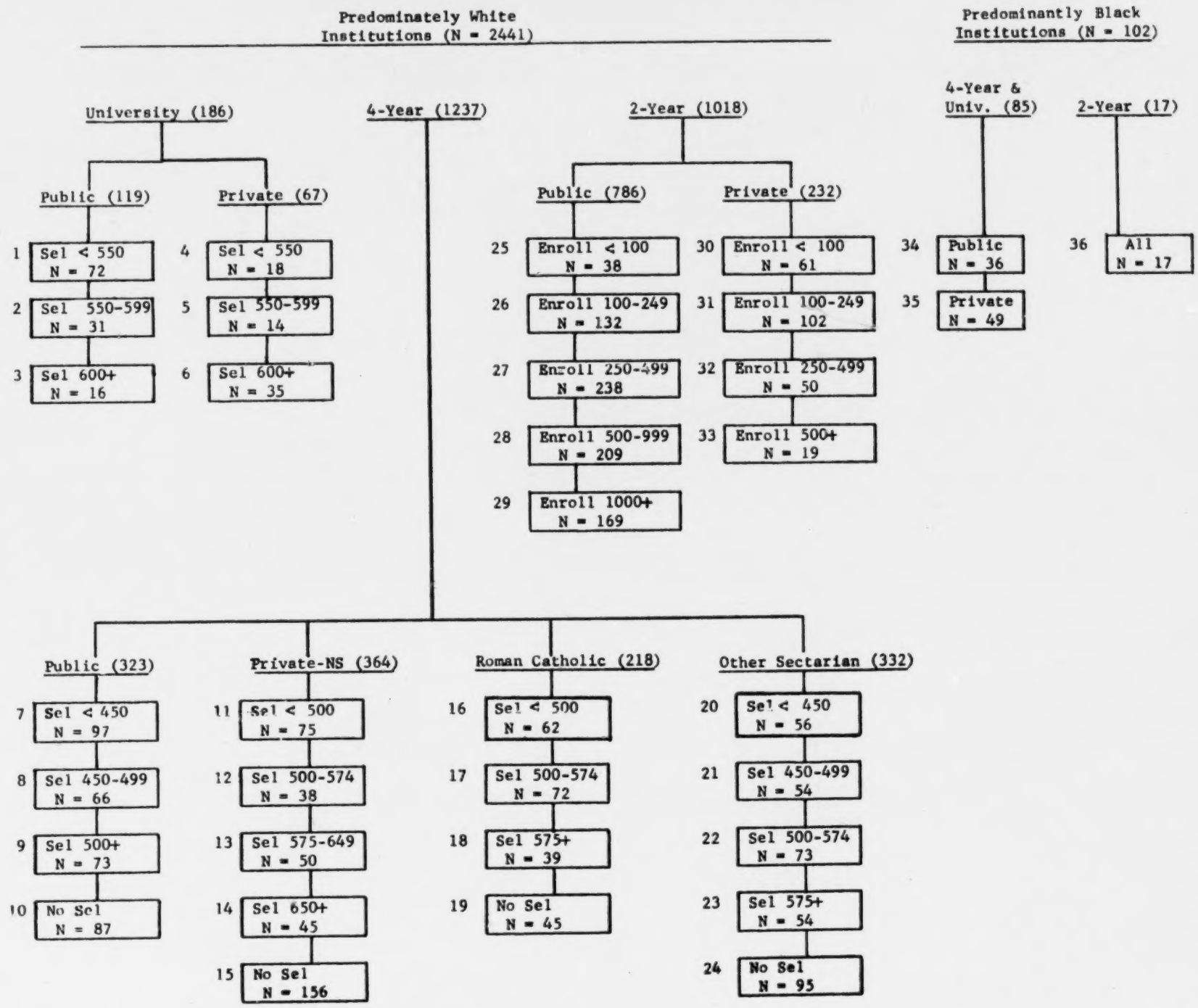
Type of Institution	Percentages of Total Freshmen				Changes, 1970-71					
	Black		Other* Minorities		Black		Other* Minorities		All Minorities	
	1970	1971	1970	1971	N	%	N	%	N	%
Public universities	4.4	5.2	3.0	3.2	+2,387	+0.8	+745	+0.2	+3,132	+1.0
Private universities	7.3	7.4	2.7	3.0	+479	+0.1	+439	+0.3	+918	+0.4
Public four-year colleges	11.3	13.1	2.8	3.1	+5,374	+1.8	+882	+0.3	+6,256	+2.1
Private four-year colleges	8.5	9.5	1.9	2.0	+4,090	+1.0	+633	+0.1	+4,723	+1.1
Public two-year colleges	11.3	8.9	7.7	6.3	+1,232	-2.4	+2,733	-1.4	+3,965	-3.8
Private two-year colleges	5.0	5.6	2.2	3.0	+882	+0.6	+719	+0.8	+1,601	+1.4
All public institutions	9.7	9.1	5.1	4.8	+8,993	-0.6	+4,360	-0.3	+13,353	-0.9
All private institutions	7.8	8.5	2.1	2.3	+5,451	+0.7	+1,791	+0.2	+7,242	+0.9
Total	9.2	9.0	4.4	4.2	+14,444	-0.2	+6,151	-0.2	+20,595	-0.4

*Other minorities includes Orientals, American Indians, and Spanish-speaking Americans.

APPENDIX

Figure 1

Stratification Design
ACE Cooperative Institutional Research Program
1971 Data Bank Population (N=2,543)[a]


Predominately White Institutions (N = 2441)
Predominantly Black Institutions (N = 102)
University (186)
4-Year (1237)
2-Year (1018)
4-Year & Univ. (85)
2-Year (17)
Public (119)
Private (67)
Public (786)
Private (232)
1 Sel < 550 N = 72
2 Sel 550-599 N = 31
3 Sel 600+ N = 16
4 Sel < 550 N = 18
5 Sel 550-599 N = 14
6 Sel 600+ N = 35
25 Enroll < 100 N = 38
26 Enroll 100-249 N = 132
27 Enroll 250-499 N = 238
28 Enroll 500-999 N = 209
29 Enroll 1000+ N = 169
30 Enroll < 100 N = 61
31 Enroll 100-249 N = 102
32 Enroll 250-499 N = 50
33 Enroll 500+ N = 19
34 Public N = 36
35 Private N = 49
36 All N = 17
Public (323)
Private-NS (364)
Roman Catholic (218)
Other Sectarian (332)
7 Sel < 450 N = 97
8 Sel 450-499 N = 66
9 Sel 500+ N = 73
10 No Sel N = 87
11 Sel < 500 N = 75
12 Sel 500-574 N = 38
13 Sel 575-649 N = 50
14 Sel 650+ N = 45
15 No Sel N = 156
16 Sel < 500 N = 62
17 Sel 500-574 N = 72
18 Sel 575+ N = 39
19 No Sel N = 45
20 Sel < 450 N = 56
21 Sel 450-499 N = 54
22 Sel 500-574 N = 73
23 Sel 575+ N = 54
24 No Sel N = 95

[a]Selectivity (Sel), used to define some stratification cells, is described in detail in Creager, John A., Astin, Alexander W., Boruch, Robert F., and Bayer, Alan E. National Norms for Entering College Freshmen - Fall 1968. ACE Research Reports, Vol. 3, No. 1. Washington: ACE, 1968, page 3.

Table A

Freshman Class Vacancies, by ACE Stratification Cell

ACE Stratification Cell	Number of Institutions		Number of Institutions With: Vacancies In Freshman Class		Surplus Of Freshmen		Total Vacancies For Freshmen	
	Sample	Pop. Est.	Sample	Pop. Est.	Sample	Pop. Est.	Sample	Pop. Est.
1	11	72	9	59	0	0		
2	9	31	5	17	1	4		
3	7	16	4	9	1	2		
4	6	18	4	12	2	6	1,285	5,503
5	4	14	3	10	0	0	600	1,946
6	11	35	6	19	1	3	617	2,084
7	15	97	11	71	1	6		
8	8	66	4	33	0	0		
9	15	73	7	34	1	4		
10	5	88	4	70	0	0		
11	13	75	11	63	0	0	732	4,420
12	6	38	2	13	0	0	222	1,406
13	27	50	14	26	2	4	1,148	1,985
14	28	45	5	8	2	3	378	743
15	8	156	6	117	1	20	798	11,729
16	17	62	16	58	0	1	1,902	6,411
17	14	72	12	62	0	1	1,177	4,918
18	12	39	9	29	0	1	981	4,037
19	6	45	5	37	0	0	314	3,194
20	9	56	9	56	0	0	1,142	7,036
21	13	54	9	37	1	4	662	2,938
22	24	73	19	58	2	7	1,684	5,528
23	35	54	24	38	4	8	1,097	1,765
24	8	95	6	71	1	12	310	3,940
25,26	4	170	3	128	0	0		
27	13	238	12	220	0	0		
28	14	209	12	179	1	15		
29	13	169	10	130	0	0		
30	2	61	2	61	0	0	228	7,041
31	12	102	11	94	0	0	1,293	10,355
32	15	50	10	34	2	7	1,188	3,802
33	4	19	3	14	0	0	750	3,836
34	6	36	4	24	0	0		
35	11	49	9	40	1	5	858	5,377
36	4	16	4	16	0	0	903	2,875
Total	409	2,543	284	1,947	24	113	45,863	359,472

Table B

Changes in First-time, Full-time Freshman Enrollments, 1970-71, by ACE Stratification Cell

ACE Stratification Cell	1970 Sample	1970 Population Estimate	1971 Sample	1971 Population Estimate	Estimated Population Change, 1970-71 N	Estimated Population Change, 1970-71 %
1	23,193	164,455	22,188	157,899	-6,556	-4.0
2	23,021	81,303	23,515	83,070	+1,767	+2.2
3	23,191	52,073	26,522	59,478	+7,405	+14.2
4	5,385	23,062	5,501	23,622	+560	+2.4
5	6,003	19,477	6,602	21,417	+1,940	+10.0
6	12,677	42,838	13,190	44,914	+2,076	+4.8
7	17,685	96,664	16,897	92,367	-4,297	-4.4
8	10,342	79,926	9,119	70,501	-9,425	-11.8
9	20,492	101,424	21,844	110,495	+9,071	+8.9
10	4,480	61,161	4,140	56,474	-4,687	-7.7
11	4,450	26,870	4,496	27,306	+436	+1.6
12	2,354	14,915	2,555	16,206	+1,291	+8.6
13	11,278	19,510	11,090	19,160	-350	-1.8
14	8,406	16,537	8,606	16,935	+398	+2.4
15	2,269	33,352	2,839	41,610	+8,258	+24.8
16	4,081	13,758	4,160	14,135	+377	+2.7
17	4,868	20,345	4,913	20,618	+273	+1.3
18	2,998	12,338	2,873	11,626	-712	-5.8
19	745	7,579	728	7,513	-66	-0.9
20	2,010	12,383	1,945	11,987	-396	-3.2
21	4,029	17,883	4,121	18,290	+407	+2.3
22	7,771	25,513	7,410	24,323	-1,190	-4.7
23	14,315	23,044	14,582	23,476	+432	+1.9
24	1,182	15,025	1,603	20,457	+5,432	+36.2
25,26	803	26,410	1,356	44,458	+18,048	+68.3
27	4,665	86,469	6,598	122,517	+36,048	+41.7
28	9,666	146,783	14,719	223,509	+76,726	+52.3
29	21,711	307,786	24,780	350,322	+42,536	+13.8
30	127	3,921	138	4,277	+356	+9.1
31	2,104	16,850	2,509	20,277	+3,427	+20.3
32	5,380	17,216	6,138	19,656	+2,440	+14.2
33	3,293	16,846	3,415	17,261	+415	+2.5
34	3,053	22,475	3,367	24,812	+2,337	+10.4
35	2,277	14,270	2,632	16,443	+2,173	+15.2
36	1,325	4,218	1,984	6,317	+2,099	+49.8
TOTAL	271,629	1,644,679	289,075	1,843,728	+199,049	+12.1

Table C

Estimated Population Changes in Minority Freshman Enrollments, 1970-71, by ACE Stratification Cell

ACE Stratification Cell	Percentages of Total Freshmen				Changes, 1970-71					
	Black		Other* Minorities		Black		Other* Minorities		All Minorities	
	1970	1971	1970	1971	N	%	N	%	N	%
1	4.0	5.3	2.6	3.2	+1,801	+1.3	+695	+0.6	+2,496	+1.9
2	3.7	3.5	1.7	1.6	-50	-0.2	-60	-0.1	-110	-0.3
3	7.1	7.3	6.5	5.8	+636	+0.2	+110	-0.7	+746	-0.5
4	7.7	7.6	2.3	2.4	+21	-0.1	+47	+0.1	+69	0.0
5	6.4	6.6	1.6	2.0	+175	+0.2	+130	+0.4	+305	+0.6
6	5.8	5.9	3.4	3.8	+169	+0.1	+257	+0.4	+426	+0.5
7	8.3	9.2	4.4	4.2	+519	+0.9	-377	-0.2	+142	+0.7
8	2.7	5.3	1.1	2.0	+1,584	+2.6	+541	+0.9	+2,125	+3.5
9	5.0	5.4	2.4	2.3	+960	+0.4	+84	-0.1	+1,044	-0.5
10	5.4	7.5	4.0	5.3	+964	+2.1	+531	+1.3	+1,495	+3.4
11	4.0	4.8	0.9	0.7	+236	+0.8	-48	-0.2	+188	+0.6
12	2.3	3.5	0.9	1.2	+228	+1.2	+51	+0.3	+279	+1.5
13	3.1	3.5	2.0	2.4	+59	+0.4	+53	+0.4	+112	+0.8
14	6.9	5.7	3.2	3.6	-177	-1.2	+90	+0.4	-87	-0.8
15	5.0	5.5	2.1	2.2	+647	+0.5	+191	+0.1	+838	+0.6
16	5.0	5.6	5.7	4.3	+114	+0.6	-179	-1.4	-65	-0.8
17	2.7	2.7	1.7	1.8	+21	0.0	+33	+0.1	+54	+0.1
18	4.6	4.6	2.5	2.5	-37	0.0	-16	0.0	-53	0.0
19	2.7	5.0	5.2	7.3	+173	+2.3	+153	+2.1	+326	+4.4
20	3.1	4.6	1.0	2.3	+166	+1.5	+148	+1.3	+314	+2.8
21	2.5	2.5	0.8	1.1	+5	0.0	+62	+0.3	+67	+0.3
22	3.6	4.4	1.0	1.1	+138	+0.8	0	+0.1	+138	+0.9
23	3.8	3.9	1.4	1.2	+39	+0.1	-37	-0.2	+2	-0.1
24	4.3	4.6	2.3	1.5	+305	+0.3	-26	-0.8	+279	-0.5
25,26	11.6	6.9	9.0	6.3	0	-4.7	+427	-2.7	+427	-7.4
27	2.5	2.0	7.3	6.2	+371	-0.5	+1,353	-1.1	+1,724	-1.6
28	11.2	8.1	7.6	3.3	+1,548	-3.1	-3,781	-4.3	-2,233	-7.4
29	13.4	11.4	7.8	8.0	-1,379	-2.0	+4,097	+0.2	+2,718	-1.8
30	3.9	9.4	3.9	12.2	+247	+5.5	+370	+8.3	+617	+13.8
31	2.6	3.4	2.3	2.5	+248	+0.8	+112	+0.2	+360	+1.0
32	2.1	2.1	0.5	0.4	+57	0.0	+3	-0.1	+60	-0.1
33	4.5	4.3	2.2	1.5	-26	-0.2	-113	-0.7	-139	-0.9
34	99.6	95.7	0.0	0.4	+1,347	-3.9	+103	+0.4	+1,450	-3.5
35	97.5	98.6	0.5	1.4	+2,307	+1.1	+163	+0.9	+2,470	+2.0
36	75.4	66.9	17.9	28.0	+1,048	-8.5	+1,016	+10.1	+2,064	+1.6
Total	9.2	9.0	4.4	4.2	+14,444	-0.2	+6,151	-0.2	+20,595	-0.4

*Other minorities includes Orientals, American Indians, and Spanish-speaking Americans.